



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/616,804	07/09/2003	Yue-Song He	AMD-H0517	2285

7590 11/18/2004
WAGNER, MURABITO & HAO LLP
Third Floor
Two North Market Street
San Jose, CA 95113

EXAMINER

BOOTH, RICHARD A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2812	

DATE MAILED: 11/18/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/616,804

Applicant(s)

HE ET AL.

Examiner

Richard A. Booth

Art Unit

2812

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 August 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15, 17 and 18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15, 17 and 18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-15 and 17-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nitta, U.S. Patent 6,582,998 in view of Fujishiro et al., US. Patent 5,294,571.

Nitta shows the invention substantially as claimed including a method of fabricating a flash memory device comprising: fabricating a gate structure comprising a tunnel oxide layer 13, a floating gate layer 14, an oxide layer 15, and a control gate layer 16 on a semiconductor substrate 11; and repairing said tunnel oxide layer using an oxidation process (see figs. 1A-1H and col. 4-line 1 to col. 5-line 63).

Nitta fails to expressly disclose where the oxidation process is a RTO process and the specific parameters used.

Fujishiro et al. discloses performing RTO rather than conventional thermal oxidation because the thermal budget is reduced (col. 1-line 61 to col. 2-line 62). In view of this disclosure, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the process of Nitta so as to perform RTO to repair the tunnel oxide because in such a way the thermal budget of the device fabrication will be reduced.

Art Unit: 2812

Concerning claims 2, 7, and 14, Nitta further comprises creating a source region 19 wherein a first impurity concentration is deposited in said semiconductor substrate, and creating a drain region 21A wherein a second impurity concentration is deposited in said semiconductor substrate.

Regarding claims 3, 9, and 15, it would have been a function of routine experimentation to determine the optimum length of the gate structure based upon a variety of factors including the amount of current to be carried and the desired device integration and such limitation would not lend patentability to the instant application absent the showing of unexpected results.

Regarding the specific time and temperature of the oxidation, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to determine through routine experimentation the optimum time and temperature to perform the oxidation based upon a variety of factors including the thickness of the oxide desired, and such limitation would not lend patentability to the instant application absent the showing of unexpected results.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 8/30/04 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that Nitta et al. fails to disclose that the tunnel oxide is damaged during fabrication of the gate structure. In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., the tunnel oxide being damaged during

Art Unit: 2812

fabrication of the gate structure) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993). Furthermore, damage to the tunnel oxide is disclosed in the Nitta et al. reference (see col. 5-lines 60-63).

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Richard A. Booth whose telephone number is (571) 272-1668. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 7:30-6:00.

Art Unit: 2812

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Niebling can be reached on (571) 272-1679. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Richard A. Booth
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2812